

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to coerce their stations to air the anti-Kerry documentary two weeks before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

They use the public airwaves free of charge, and are obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for their bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of pre-packaged news delivered from dubious sources to the news room, we need to see real local people who take responsibility for their journalism and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

There is No Question that the airing and timing of this documentary constitute an in-kind donation to the Bush-Cheney campaign. To be fair, the Kerry camp should be given the right to respond to the documentary for an equal amount of time, on the same or the next night, or the documentary should not be permitted to air. Let the documentary be released to theatres, as Fahrenheit 9-11 was.

Thank you for your attention to this egregious misuse of public airways, and for ensuring fairness in the use of same.